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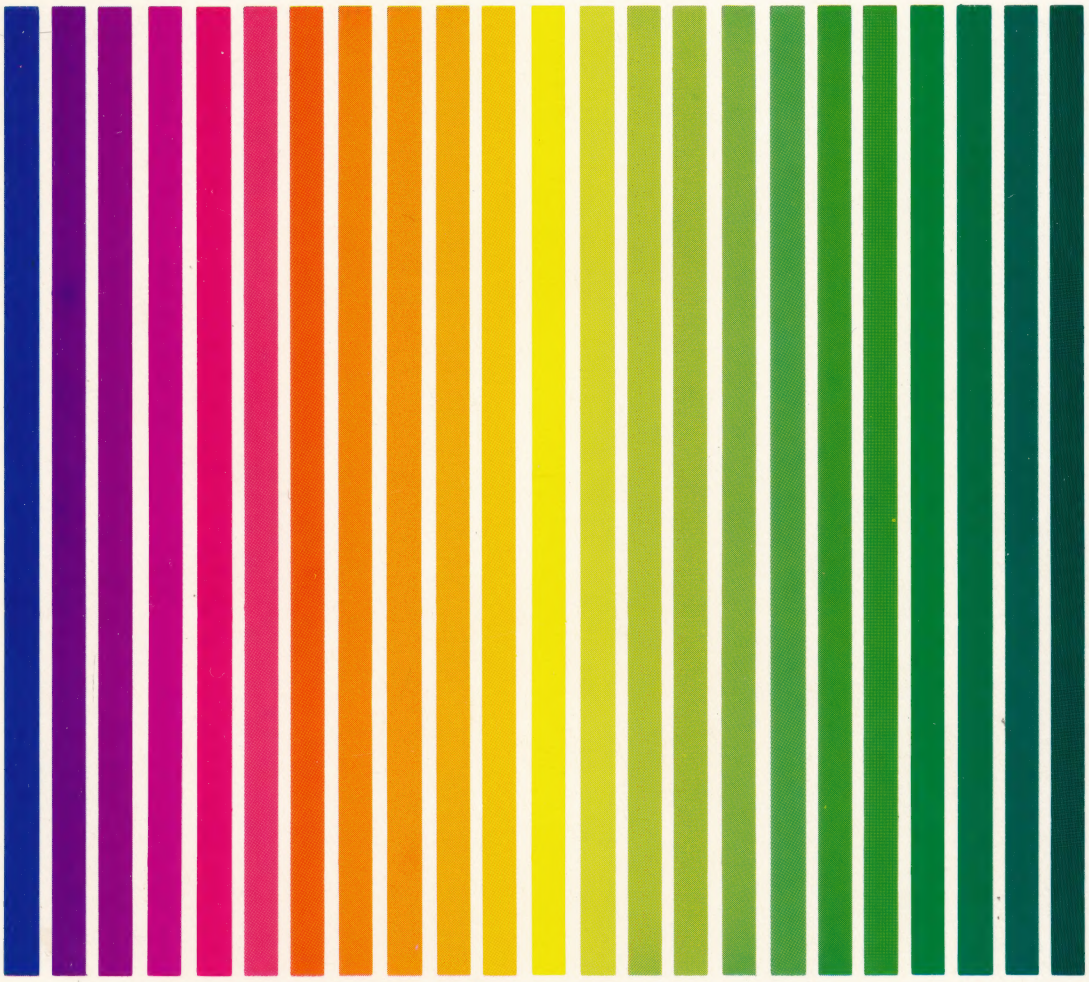

Al Harberg

DISKMENU

Load BASIC or machine-language programs
with a single keystroke

Diskette: 16K (APX-20173)

User-Written Software for ATARI Home Computers

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by

Allen Harberg

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

DISKMENU is a real time-saver for anyone with programs that don't load automatically into computer memory. It gives you a quick and easy way to organize and use the programs you accumulate on various diskettes. With DISKMENU, you use a single keystroke to load any BASIC program stored in SAVE format and machine-language programs stored in BINARY SAVE format (that is, a program normally loaded using option L, Binary Load, on the Disk Operating System menu). However, DISKMENU won't load all machine-language programs. For example, it can't handle programs that load into an area usually occupied by the Disk Operating System, or machine-language programs that load into the memory locations occupied by the ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge (hexadecimal 8000-BFFF). DISKMENU can display and run as many as 47
programs on a diskette.

To set up your program diskettes, you copy two programs from the DISKMENU diskette to each program diskette. From then on, you insert your program diskette into the disk drive and, after the list of programs on the diskette displays, you type the character next to the name of the program you want to load into computer memory. DISKMENU loads in and starts your program and off you go.

REQUIRED ACCESSORIES

16K RAM
ATARI 810 Disk Drive
ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge

CONTACTING THE AUTHOR

Users wishing to contact the author about DISKMENU may write to him at:

Box 561
Bloomfield, CT 06002

GETTING STARTED

TRANSFERRING DISKMENU TO YOUR PROGRAM DISKETTES

The best way to familiarize yourself with how DISKMENU works is to select one of your DOS-2 formatted diskettes containing a handful of games. The diskette you select:

a. must contain at least 30 free sectors,

b. must not contain files named AUTORUN.SYS or DISKMENU, because DISKMENU uses these two names, and

c. must contain the Atari DOS files DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS. You can create these files using option H (Write DOS File) on the DOS menu. Instructions for creating these files are on pages 35 and 36 of the ATARI 400/800 Disk Operating System II Reference Manual ("the DOS manual").

You install DISKMENU on a program diskette as follows:

1. Insert the ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge in the left cartridge slot of your computer.

2. Turn on your disk drive.

3. When the BUSY light goes out, open the disk drive door and insert the DISKMENU diskette with the label in the lower right-hand corner nearest to you.

4. Turn on your computer and your TV set. The DISKMENU program will load into computer memory and start automatically.

5. When the diskette directory displays, type A to select DOS.SYS.

6. Now add the two DISKMENU programs to your selected diskette. Using DOS option O (Duplicate File), move the AUTORUN.SYS and DISKMENU files from the DISKMENU diskette to your game diskette. For instructions on how to move these programs using DOS option O, see pages 47 and 48 of the DOS manual.

7. To start DISKMENU on your selected diskette, insert your converted diskette in the disk drive, and turn the computer off and then on again.

DISKMENU FUNCTIONS

DISPLAYING THE DIRECTORY OF PROGRAMS

Once you've copied the two DISKMENU files onto a diskette containing other programs, you can run your programs with DISKMENU in four ways:

1. If you're currently in BASIC, insert the program diskette containing the program you want to use, and type RUN "D:DISKMENU" to display the directory of programs on the diskette.

OR

2. If you've been using a diskette that doesn't have the DISKMENU files on it, insert the program diskette containing the transferred DISKMENU files and the program you want to use, and then turn your computer off and back on. DISKMENU will load into computer memory and automatically display the directory of programs on the diskette.

OR

3. If you're just starting a session with your computer, turn on disk drive #1, insert any program diskette containing the transferred DISKMENU files, and then turn on your computer. DISKMENU will load into computer memory and automatically display the directory of programs on the diskette.

OR

4. If you've just run a program from DISKMENU, you can return to the directory of programs on the diskette by pressing the SYSTEM RESET key.

LOADING AND STARTING A PROGRAM

When you run DISKMENU, you see a list of every program on your diskette. To the left of each program name is a character. DISKMENU uses 26 letters, 10 numbers, and 11 special characters to display and run the first 47 programs on a diskette. If you have more than 47, DISKMENU prints the first 47 along with a message that there are other program names that won't fit on the screen.

Select the program you'd like to run by pressing the corresponding letter on your keyboard. DISKMENU then loads that program into computer memory and starts it.

LOADING A PROGRAM

Instead of running a program, you may just want to load it into computer memory. To load your program, press the SELECT key before you press the key corresponding to the program you want. DISKMENU then loads the program into computer memory, but doesn't start it.

TROUBLESHOOTING

WHAT IF I PRESS THE WRONG KEY?

If you press a key not corresponding to one listed in the displayed diskette directory, DISMENU warns you and waits for you to press an appropriate key.

Suppose, for example, DISKMENU displays 12 programs. You would select a program by pressing any key from A through L. If you press any other key, a beep sounds, the characters on your screen turn upside down for a few seconds, and DISKMENU waits for another keypress.

WHAT IF I TRY TO RUN A NON-RUNABLE PROGRAM?

DISKMENU can run any program stored on a diskette in BASIC's SAVE format (i.e., that used the SAVE command in BASIC). It can also run most machine-language programs stored on a diskette using DOS option K, Binary Save. (Programs using memory locations hexadecimal 8000-BFFF (occupied by the ATARI BASIC cartridge) or locations 1540-1A7C (the RAM-resident portion of DOS) won't load or run.)

You could make a mistake and try to run a data file, or a program that had been saved in LIST format instead of SAVE format. Or, you could try to run a system file, such as MEM.SAV or AUTORUN.SYS. If you try to run any of these files, DISKMENU displays the message:

```
<filename> IS NOT EXECUTABLE
```

and waits for you to select another program to run.

WHAT IF MY SCREEN DOESN'T CLEAR WHEN DISKMENU IS THROUGH, AND MY GAME PROGRAM STARTS TO RUN?

There's a small chance your game won't clear the screen before it begins to execute. This could happen only if your game program begins with a GRAPHICS 50 statement. If this should happen, load the DISKMENU file itself into computer memory (using the command LOAD "D:DISKMENU"), list statement 217 (the command is LIST 217) and remove the REM from the statement. That is, change statement number 217 from:

```
217 REM GRAPHICS 0:? "ʞ"
```

to

```
217 GRAPHCS 0:? "ʞ"
```

CUSTOMIZING DISKMENU

DISPLAYING THE NAMES OF PROGRAMS DISKMENU NORMALLY DOESN'T DISPLAY

You might want DISKMENU to display programs such as DUP.SYS, AUTORUN.SYS, MEM.SAV, and DISKMENU in its directory. To add these files to the DISKMENU directory display, delete the appropriate statement in the range of lines 342 - 346 of the DISKMENU file. For example, to cause DISKMENU to display the AUTORUN.SYS file in its directory, delete line number 344:

```
344 IF I$(Q3,Q13)="AUTORUN.SYS" THEN NN=NN-1:GOTO
Q320
```

EXLUDING PROGRAMS FROM DISKMENU'S DIRECTORY DISPLAY

You might also want to exclude programs from DISKMENU's directory display. For example, you may have all of your disksettes cataloged, and each diskette may contain a file named "DISK.CAT." You probably wouldn't want DISKMENU to display "DISK.CAT" as part of the diskette's directory display. To eliminate "DISK.CAT" from the list, add a statement similar to those in the range of lines 342 - 346 in the DISKMENU file. For example, you might add the statement:

```
347 IF I$(Q3,Q13)="DISK.CAT" THEN NN=NN-1:GOTO
Q320
```

RESTORING THE SYSTEM RESET KEY TO A COLD START

DISKMENU changes the SYSTEM RESET key from a "warm start" button to a "cold start" button. In a warm start, any changes recorded in memory by your program (such as a game's high score) are retained, whereas in a cold start, all changes recorded in memory are erased. Therefore, once you've run a program from DISKMENU, pressing the SYSTEM RESET key has the same effect as turning the computer off and back on, erasing all previous information in computer memory.

You can restore the SYSTEM RESET key to its original function by changing statement 218 in the DISKMENU file to a REMARK. That is, change it from

```
218 POKE 5478,0:POKE 5479,0
```

to

```
218 REM POKE 5478,0:POKE 5479,0
```

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We, Atari, Inc., guarantee to you, the original retail purchaser, that the medium on which the APX program is recorded and any hardware accessories sold by APX are free from defects for thirty days from the date of purchase. Any applicable implied warranties, including warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, are also limited to thirty days from the date of purchase. Some states don't allow limitations on a warranty's period, so this limitation might not apply to you. If you discover such a defect within the thirty-day period, call APX for a Return Authorization Number, and then return the product along with proof of purchase date to APX. We will repair or replace the product at our option.

You void this warranty if the APX product: (1) has been misused or shows signs of excessive wear; (2) has been damaged by use with non-ATARI products; or (3) has been serviced or modified by anyone other than an Authorized ATARI Service Center. Incidental and consequential damages are not covered by this warranty or by any implied warranty. Some states don't allow exclusion of incidental or consequential damages, so this exclusion might not apply to you.

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Review Form

We're interested in your experiences with APX programs and documentation, both favorable and unfavorable. Many of our authors are eager to improve their programs if they know what you want. And, of course, we want to know about any bugs that slipped by us, so that the author can fix them. We also want to know whether our instructions are meeting your needs. You are our best source for suggesting improvements! Please help us by taking a moment to fill in this review sheet. Fold the sheet in thirds and seal it so that the address on the bottom of the back becomes the envelope front. Thank you for helping us!

1. Name and APX number of program.

2. If you have problems using the program, please describe them here.

3. What do you especially like about this program?

4. What do you think the program's weaknesses are?

5. How can the catalog description be more accurate or comprehensive?

6. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being "poor" and 10 being "excellent", please rate the following aspects of this program:

   _____ Easy to use
   _____ User-oriented (e.g., menus, prompts, clear language)
   _____ Enjoyable
   _____ Self-instructive
   _____ Useful (non-game programs)
   _____ Imaginative graphics and sound

7. Describe any technical errors you found in the user instructions (please give page numbers).

8. What did you especially like about the user instructions?

9. What revisions or additions would improve these instructions?

10. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 representing "poor" and 10 representing "excellent", how would you rate the user instructions and why?

11. Other comments about the program or user instructions:

From

STAMP

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[seal here]